

## GREEN HR: THE ESSENCE FOR SUSTAINABILITY IN THE 21ST CENTURY

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### ABSTRACT

The Green human resources management is a new management philosophy is based on green movement related to Protection of surroundings and pattern in which “green” concept applied to the field of human resource management. It's essential meaning is to take “green” management tools to enhance ecological benefits i.e., “To defend & improve the human environment for present and future generation has become an imperative goal for mankind.” Green HR is basically for economic and social perspective to achieve employees' psychology, human and ecological harmony. It was affirmed that, Green HR is the use of Human Resources Management policies to endorse the sustainable use of resources within business communities on the significance of going green and adopting various environment management techniques in business organizations and to our surrounding milieu, more generally, promotes the cause of environmental sustainability.

The Green HRM involves indispensable elements i.e. ‘environmental friendly HR practices’, which will as well help the producers and Manufacturers in visualization and brand building. Rigorous implementation of the ISO 14000 standards and environmental audit systems will help change the organizational culture and approach towards waste management& pollution. In this paper an attempt has been made to promote the importance of Green HRM in polluting industries. The topic of environmental sustainability is drawing increased attention. Efficiency created by Green HRM can help cut operational costs and facilitates the industry professionals to realize their Corporate Social Responsibility in an enhanced manner.

**KEYWORDS:** Green HRM, Environmental Friendly Solutions, Protective Environment, Natural Resources

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### INTRODUCTION

The Green HRM is the requirement of the 21st century. Every day, it is reported that there is tremendous pressure on planet Earth because of the excess consumption of natural resources as a raw material by the Industries and other commercial organizations. The situation is so alarming that the scientist and the environmentalist are discussing the issues of ecological imbalances. Green HR is a tendril of Green management philosophy which utilizes employee interaction to promote sustainable practices and increases employee awareness on the issues of sustainability, policies, and practices followed by a firm for Environment Management. It has been acclaimed that green management is the policy which has to be incorporated by an organization in order to organize the environmental management strategies for protecting and measuring environmental aspects.

Green HRM initiatives help create a culture of having concern for environmental protection in which the Preservation of the natural surroundings as they include forests, land, animals, plants, and other natural phenomena are referred to as the natural surroundings. This is all done through Conservation of the natural milieu

to be very cautious in the way of using it in order to contribution to environmental sustainability as long as possible, to use it at the most Optimized level so that future generations will be able to utilize it. Green HRM is referred to “all the HR activities involved in implementation, development and continuing conservation of a system that aims at making employee to reduce wastage inputs and enhance performance of profession of an organization”.

**Green HR is the use of HRM policies to promote the sustainable use of resources within the business organizations.**

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Lado and Wilson[1] in 1994 defined “HRM system as a set of discrete but consistent actions, purposes and process that is to create, enhance and retain greening within each employee of the organization as directed at attracting, rising and upholding a firm’s human resources”, HR practices as generally implemented with the planned schemes that are in line with the traditions and commerce stratagem.

Boselie, 2001 [2] In this paper author recognized that there are various researchers who support the Human Resource Management practices to be effective for promotion personnel capital that results in providing routine and competitive benefit to contributors of organization.

The paper has its focus on at least on four meanings in the aspects such as organizing people at their profession human resource management (HRM):

- Preservation of the natural environment.
- Conservation of the natural environment.
- Avoidance or minimization of environmental pollution.
- Generation of gardens and looking like natural places.

Thus, an employee who may be a manager or non-manager is supposed to perform four roles for becoming a green employee.

**GREEN HR;** It is the combination of two consequential elements, One is eco-friendly practices ,Which refers to the actions or policies that do not negatively affect the environment & another one is preservation of knowledge capital which is an intangible asset of an organization.

**GREEN JOB;** “subsequently finding an environmentally conscious career “ In another words we can say green jobs are green when they help to reduce negative environmental impact ultimately lading to eco friendly, economically & socially sustainable enterprises. Specialized knowledge , skills, training or experience are required for these jobs.

**GREEN FIRM;** The green or clean or low carbon firm or organization –defined as the sector that produces goods and services with an environmental benefit. These organizations provide products and services in such a way that are instructed to utilize resources more effectively and efficiently. For its proper implementation an effective corporate Green Management System is important to promote a great deal of technical and management skills among all employees. It has been observed from past studies that greater the strength of green Hr policies, the greater is the intensity of adoption of environment management systems and policies by different organization.

## OBJECTIVES

- To find out the challenges for a HR manager in the 21st century & attempt to spread the awareness amongst the industries on Green HR, thereby helping to understand environment related issues.
- To elaborate on various green practices that can facilitate in developing a Green workplace & reduce environmental problems, by going green.
- To identify how corporations today develop human resource policies for promoting Environment management initiatives.
- To provide guidelines on how businesses could implement green practices in each of the business functions.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Secondary Data

The data was collected from relevant research journals, websites and articles in order to obtain a detailed understanding of the subject and authenticity of information.

**Table 1: Impact of Industrialization on Environment- Industries having an impact on Natural Resources**

Sr No.	Industry	Natural Resources Used	Product	Impact
1	Paper	Trees & Plants	Paper	Forest
2	Food Products (Inclusive of Hotel Industry)	Tree ,Plants, Animals & Water	Human Consumption Products.	Animals, Land& Water
3	Automobiles	Petroleum	Car, Bus, Truck & other modes of Transport	Air pollution
4	Textile	Plants, Water, Land	Cotton	Water, Air, Noise pollution
5	Sugar	Water, Soil	Sugarcane	Air pollution
6	Pharmaceutical	Plants & Animals	Medicine	Flora & Fauna, Biodiversity
7	Chemicals	Soils, Ores, Minerals	Agriculture & Industry Products	Pollutes Environment

### Towards Green Thinking in the Organization:

HR plays an important role in Management of people which is regarded as asset of an organization. The responsibility of the present Human Resource managers is to incorporate the Green HR Philosophy in corporate mission statement and HR –policies. The people in the organizations must realize the importance of Green Movement, Green HR and Green Audit. It should also be spread with the help of training programs, in recruitment, etc.

### The HR Role

Many organizations are adopting an integrated approach to implement Environment Management programs. However, achieving this integration of HR and Environment Management involves importantly changing the approach of some HR staff themselves to green issues as well.

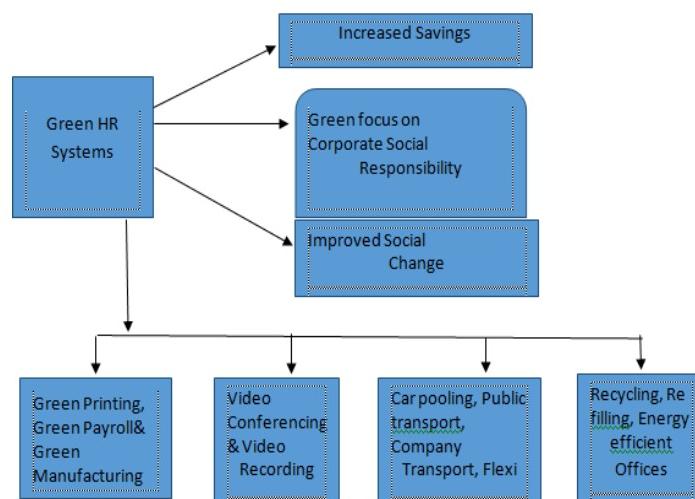
## Towards Clean HR:

The following are the suggestive measures that can be adopted by the industries in their pursuit towards clean HR:

- Industrial operation requires lot of consumables –paper, plastic, and envelope and ink toners. By taking a step towards clean HR, many manufacturing companies are shifting from old packing material like tin containers and plastic bags to eco-friendly packing material:
- Environmental management standards exist to help companies to minimize the operational effects on natural resources and environment. ISO 14000 (Environmental Management Standards) exists to help companies to minimize the operational effects on natural resources and environment.
- Compliance with pollution norms, conducting environmental audits and using eco-friendly technology and producing eco-friendly products.
- Paperless Office: With integration of IT, banks and other service sector who are major consumer of paper, can reduce the consumption. E-business and E-learning models can change the methods and procedures at offices.
- Wastage-Disposal: This recent development in disposal of industrial waste, domestic waste, the sewerage system, bio-medical waste is an example of “Protective Environment” or we care for environment.

## Green HR Systems- Impacts

The positive impacts of Green HR systems are summarized in Figure 1 below:



**Figure 1**

Few cases are reported below where the traces of Green Human Resource Management and Clean HR are visible:

- Indian Oil Corporate Social Responsibility has been the corner stone since the year 1964. Its mission is to enrich the quality of life of the community and preserve ecological balance and heritage through a strong environment conscience.
- In Bhopal Gas Tragedy of December 2-3, 1984, leakage of Methyl is octane gas and other chemicals has lead to

3787 deaths, 38478 temporary and 3900 permanent disabilities. This forced the Government to take necessary steps by amending the laws like “The Factories Act,1948.”

- According to a report released by USGBC in this year ‘India ranks third globally with the most LEED certified space .LEED green building rating system is that system which evaluates environmental performance and defining standards which constitutes a green building .There are so many corporate offices registered under green building i.e ITC & wipro Technology in Gurgaon.
- C11Godrej GBC is the first green building of India, so we can say imitative of green building movement has been taken by C11Godrej in 2001.
- The government of Tamil Naidu is planning to build solar powered green houses. It is a great step towards sustainability in this century. To elucidate the concept of Green HRM, the initiatives taken by one of the largest private and public sector companies- ITC and ONGC respectively- has been considered.
- Govardhan is an example of eco-friendly village in Thane district in Maharashtra.

## CONCLUSIONS

The paper has reviewed the literature on Green HRM and few Green Practices and offered a model in Green HRM.A key finding of the Green HR survey indicates that 54% organizations, incorporated environmental management in their business operations, 74%used web to reduce travel,76%promote reduction of paper use and 60% implement wellness programmers for employees. The future of Green HRM appears promising for all stakeholders of HRM Unions and employees. It can support employers to take on Green HRM practices and policies that help maintain and improve employee health and welfare. Green HR involves reducing the carbon footprint via less printing of paper. In India, green movement and Green HR is still in infancy. However, through CSR programs, Green awareness is being generated and few organizations have started environmentally friendly HR-practices and the preservation of knowledge capital. To conclude one can say that HR has a role in the pursuit of greener business practices, a role to save planet earth, recruit new employees, enforce greener working practices and change environmentally unfriendly behaviors. HR has significant opportunity to contribute to the green movement and motivate the society to work for greener business.

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